

Problems of English instructional management and needs on  
communication skills development in the 21st century of  
students in a private university in Bangkok  
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การสื่อสารในศตวรรษที่ 21 ของนักศึกษามหาวิทยาลัยเอกชนในกรุงเทพมหานคร

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Abstract

The objectives of this research were to investigate the problems of English instructional management and needs on communication skills development in the 21st century of students in a private university in Bangkok in the 2019 academic year. The participants were 368 students. The instrument used for collecting data was a questionnaire- the six levels of the rating scale. The questionnaire examined the degree of English teaching and learning problems and students' preferred English teaching and learning needs. The SPSS program was employed to find the frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation and analyze the standard deviation difference by one-way ANOVA. This study suggested that there were many problems in the English instructional management for communication in a private university in Bangkok. The significant problematic issues ranged from students' communication problems such as answering questions, discussions, and presentations to the lack of courage to use English for communication. Teachers lacked teaching preparation and did not encourage learners to communicate in English in the classroom regarding instructional management problems. Instructors did not have expertise in teaching English for communication. The need to develop communication skills in the 21<sup>st</sup> century found that students wanted to improve their listening skills. Most students wanted to listen to various information, capture important points effectively, tell the story's purpose, and express their opinions on what they heard.

**Keywords:** language for communication; English communication skills;  
teaching English

## บทคัดย่อ

การวิจัยครั้งนี้มีวัตถุประสงค์เพื่อศึกษาปัญหาภาษาอังกฤษการจัดการเรียนการสอนและความต้องการในการพัฒนาทักษะการสื่อสารในศตวรรษที่ 21 ของนักศึกษาในมหาวิทยาลัยเอกชนแห่งหนึ่งในกรุงเทพมหานคร ในปีการศึกษา 2562 เป็นการวิจัยเชิงสำรวจ กลุ่มตัวอย่างเป็นนักเรียน 368 คน เครื่องมือที่ใช้ในการรวบรวมข้อมูลคือแบบสอบถาม - ระดับคะแนน 6 ระดับ แบบสอบถามได้ตรวจสอบระดับของปัญหาการเรียนการสอนภาษาอังกฤษและความต้องการของพวกเขาในการเรียนการสอนภาษาอังกฤษ การวิเคราะห์ข้อมูลทำได้โดยใช้โปรแกรม SPSS เพื่อค้นหาความถี่ร้อยละค่าเฉลี่ยและส่วนเบี่ยงเบนมาตรฐานและวิเคราะห์ความแตกต่างของค่าเบี่ยงเบนมาตรฐานโดยการวิเคราะห์ความแปรปรวนทางเดียว ผลการวิจัยพบว่าการจัดการเรียนการสอนภาษาอังกฤษเพื่อการสื่อสารในมหาวิทยาลัยเอกชนในกรุงเทพมหานครมีปัญหาจำนวนมาก ปัญหาส่วนใหญ่คือนักเรียนที่มีปัญหาในการสื่อสารเช่นการตอบคำถามการอภิปรายการนำเสนอโดยขาดความกล้าในการใช้ภาษาอังกฤษในการสื่อสาร ปัญหาน้อยที่สุดของการจัดการเรียนการสอนภาษาอังกฤษคือครูที่ขาดการเตรียมการสอนและไม่สนับสนุนให้ผู้เรียนสื่อสารภาษาอังกฤษในห้องเรียนและไม่มีความเชี่ยวชาญในการสอนภาษาอังกฤษเพื่อการสื่อสาร ความต้องการในการพัฒนาทักษะการสื่อสารในศตวรรษที่ 21 พบว่านักเรียนต้องการพัฒนาทักษะการฟังมากที่สุด นักเรียนส่วนใหญ่ต้องการฟังข้อมูลที่หลากหลายและสามารถจับประเด็นสำคัญได้อย่างมีประสิทธิภาพสามารถบอกจุดประสงค์ของเรื่องและสามารถแสดงความคิดเห็นในสิ่งที่พวกเขาได้ยิน

**คำสำคัญ:** ภาษาเพื่อการสื่อสาร; ทักษะการสื่อสารภาษาอังกฤษ สอนภาษาอังกฤษ

## Introduction

This study investigated English instructional management's problems perceived by the students in a private university in Bangkok. Additionally, this research explored the needs for communication skills development in the 21st century of students studying at the selected university.

Thailand is aware of the importance of English, especially the use of English for communication, especially speaking skills to enable effective communication with the people of the world. Many Thai students have been learning the English language for many years, from elementary school to university, but cannot speak English fluently (Kijjarak, 2010; Inkaew, 2020). One reason why Thai students lack English-speaking skills was a lack of confidence (Edufirsts, 2020). Most Thai students were shy and not confident to express themselves through English speaking. From personal experience, the researcher has been teaching undergraduate students in a private university in Bangkok. The majority of students had problems mispronouncing the words. They could not speak English with the grammatically correct pattern. This research, "problems of English instructional management and the needs on communication skills development in the 21st century of students in a private university in Bangkok", could fill the gap to explore the English instructional problems among the students studying in a private university. Moreover, this study was also a tool to find students' needs to improve their English communication skills.

This paper aimed to investigate the problems of English instructional management and needs for communication skills development in the 21<sup>st</sup> century of students in a private university in Bangkok in order to develop learners to have English language skills, prepare the students to live in the 21st century, and support the development of the country in the future. This study attempted to find answers for the following questions; 1. What were English instructional management problems in a private university in Bangkok? 2. What were the students' needs to improve their English communication skills in the 21st century?

### **Literature review**

The usage of the English language has become significant in our daily life. It is the language that is used globally nowadays, specifically in the fields of educational academics. (Ernesto & Boybanting, 2015). It is also an essential tool for communication in occupation, building cultural awareness, and understanding other nations' vision (Chartrakul, 2008). It is, therefore, necessary to develop the population's potential to have some English skills - the ability to communicate in English effectively. (Wannapok, 2004).

### **Current English language learning situation in Thailand**

English has been a critical international language employed to communicate with the outside world for various purposes, such as economic, political, academic, and cultural contact (Baker & Jarunthawatchai, 2017). Teaching the English language in Thailand has always been a problem; as Inkaew (2020) states, the root of the problematic educational issues could be from the Education Ministry's distorted policy and its direction. The students were unable to use English correctly. (Yusap, 2012). The students studying English in higher education also had issues in using English, especially English speaking skills. (Tribolet, 2012; Sarkis, 2012). Most Thai students could not speak English fluently even though they had learned English since elementary school. Many students were well aware of grammar and vocabulary, but they still could not speak English, which would affect their career in the future (Tangkijmongkol & Wasanasomsithi, 2013).

The researcher examined several literature aspects from various scholars. Most English teaching problems in Thailand were problems regarding teacher, administrative issues, learning environment problems, the problems with criteria for assessing English usage, and the curriculum problems. (Bunnag, 2018.) Udomkiatsakul (2016) studied that students who had issues with English subjects were undergraduate students of private universities. Students thought that the subject content did not meet their communication needs since the study's content focused on theory rather than practice.

### **English instructional management**

Instructional management has been recognized as the most crucial part of education management (Ghofur, Rupawandi & Ahmad, 2017). Danarwati (2013) argued that instructional

management is an activity to plan teaching and learning programs, implement teaching and learning processes, assess the process and learning outcomes, and develop classroom management.

Several literature reviews suggested English instructional management problems are as follows. Sriyotha (2012) states that most students had difficulties learning English at the highest level because they possessed limited English knowledge. The students lacked confidence in speaking and expressing their thoughts in English. Added to that, they did not prioritize the importance of learning English as their learning goal. However, Chan (2007) claims that most students wished to improve their English speaking ability for academic purposes.

### **Communication skill development in 21st century**

Communication in the 21st century is characterized by the nature of communication, which tends to be globalized. Flew (2008) describes that we are moving from the typical model of 20th-century communication characterized by one-to-many, top-down mass towards a 21st-century communication model that is more open. English is an essential language in the 21st century and is a significant subject for students to learn. (Wankong, 2016). The curriculum and methodology of 21st century education and learning should provide learners to learn and develop themselves. Teachers should create and design an environment that is supportive and conducive to purposeful learning (Jarungkiatkul, 2018). The fact that 21st-century communication drives exceptional international communication presents some opportunities. The learning opportunities would be more significant due to the massive available contact. Goldsmith (2008) argues that 21st Century communication provides the potential for "global connectedness."

Several previous research has revealed English teaching and learning problems and needs on communication skills development at higher education institutions. Phonmanee & Sinsuwan (2001) claimed that Master's degree students needed to have English. There is an opinion that the language exam of English is essential to pursuing a graduate. Srisueb & Wasanasomsith (2010) states that the students felt that they needed to develop language skills more, especially speaking and reading. They had positive attitudes toward learning English as a third language, and they wanted to study English with more varied teaching and learning materials in the classroom.

### **Research Methodology**

This part of the study begins with an overview and justification for the research approach selected to investigate English instructional management problems. The samples in this study were undergraduate students studying in a private university in Bangkok, the academic year 2019, using the Krejcie and Morgan sample size table (1970: 607-610). The number of samples was 368. The instrument used for data collection was questionnaires with six levels of the student's rating scale.

As this study explored the needs for communication skills development in the 21st century, quantitative and qualitative data were employed to provide a comprehensive analysis of the research problems. The data were collected from the participants and their stakeholders. Next, the results were integrated to provide an interpretation of the overall findings. The priority of research type in this study is quantitative, which was emphasized first to explore the following questions. Firstly, what were English instructional management problems in a selected private university? The final question was what students' needs to improve their English communication skills in the 21st century were.

The geographical context for this study is a private university in Bangkok. The selected institution features various faculties where its students are required to pass English for communication. Concerning respondents and their profiles, the main participants were 368 students (N=368) from various faculties. This study chose a diverse group of respondents with a relatively large sample size to cope with some students who may produce biased responses.

### **Research instruments**

The research instruments included a set of questionnaires. Before constructing the questionnaires, the researcher reviewed the literature related to English language teaching and learning problems to gather preliminary information about problems and needs in English teaching and learning. The questionnaires comprised four parts: the first part was the respondents' questions to get background information. The second section is a set of self-reflection questions designed to ask the opinions regarding instructional management problems for communication in a 6-level estimation scale, divided into five areas: the curriculum, instructor, measurement, evaluation, and learners. The third section is questions designed to seek opinions concerning their needs in developing English communication skills in the last Century 21 on a 6-level scale, divided into listening, speaking, reading, writing, and communication skills. The fourth section is of the open-ended response type, in which the respondents may add suggestions and additional comments.

This paper aimed at establishing the reliability of the questionnaire by estimating the consistency of responses of all the participants; that is to say, similar questions led to similar responses. The four English course instructors reviewed each question in the questionnaires through the Index of Congruence (IOC) analysis (Srisathidnarakul, 2010). The experts in the field checked for the reliability of each statement in each part of the questionnaire. The second part consists of six question items, as displayed in Table 1 below.

**Table 1:** Opinions on problems of teaching and learning English for communication

No	Problems	Questions
1	curriculum	The subject content is inconsistent with the teaching and learning of English for Communication.
		The subject content does not correspond to learners' needs in terms of using the language for communication.
		The content of the study focuses on theory rather than practice.
		The subject content cannot be used to communicate in everyday life.
		The specified number of study hours per week is not appropriate.
2	Instructors	Teachers are not proficient in teaching English for communication.
		Teachers lack the preparation for teaching.
		Teachers are not responsible for teaching.
		Teachers lack the enthusiasm for teaching in order to communicate in English.
		Teachers do not encourage learners to communicate in English in the classroom.
3	Teaching methods and learning activities	The activity does not encourage learners to use English for communication
		Lack of teaching techniques to communicate in English
		Teaching methods are not varied.
		Lack of communication skills training
		Lack of English technology for communication
4	Measurement and evaluation	The exam is inconsistent with the English content for communication.
		The exam emphasizes the accuracy of grammar rather than the use of language for communication.
		Measurements are not suitable for communication skills.
		Use the specific test to assess the learning outcome of communicating in English.
		The written test is not suitable for assessing communication skills.
5	Learners	The student has difficulty pronouncing words, phrases, or sentences.
		The learner has a knowledge problem with vocabulary.
		The students lack understanding of the rules. English grammar
		The students have problems answering questions and speak in front of the class
		The student has difficulty reading textbooks.

**Table 2:** The needs to improve English communication skills in the 21st century

No	Needs	Questions
1	Listening Skills	Listen to a variety of information such as documentaries, interviews, news.
		Able to listen effectively, such as telling details Or capture important points
		Able to listen and tell the purpose of the story
		Able to analyze between facts and opinions from the heard .stories.
		Able to express their own opinions on the subject listened to

2	Reading Skills	Able read and understand from various sources such as magazines, newspapers
		Able to analyze the reading, such as telling details or important points
		Able to summarize the gist of the story read
		Able tell the author's reason for the argument of information
		Able to make reasonable comments on the reading text.
3	Speaking Skills	Able speak in a variety of situations
		Able to communicate grammatically correctly.
		Able to answer questions by giving reasons
		Able to communicate to reflect their opinions.
		Able to speak and present information in an interesting way
4	Writing Skills	Have an understanding of basic grammar in writing.
		Able to write correctly according to the writing principles/styles.
		Able to write communication in both formal and informal ways.
		Able to write work from researching
		Able to write to reflect their point of view
5	Communication Skills	Able to communicate in various ways such as speaking, writing, gesture
		Able to communicate in a variety of ways, such as posters.
		Able to use technology to communicate
		Able to communicate to exchange ideas between each other
		Able to interact with listeners/readers to communicate.

### Data collection and analysis

The researcher distributed the questionnaires to the 368 respondents and collected them after two weeks. The data from 368 complete questionnaires were analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS). Descriptive statistics were used to compute the mean scores and standard deviations of the problems. A T-Test was utilized for any significant differences in the problems and needs of students. Besides, frequency, percentage, and weighted scores were used to examine the needs of students. For the final stage of integration and interpretation, the interpretation procedures were applied to interpret the data from the quantitative findings obtained from the primary group of students and interpreted for a holistic picture of the findings.

### Findings and Discussion

This study aimed to investigate English instructional management problems and develop English communication skills in the 21st century in a private university in Bangkok. Specifically, this study explored the following two key research questions: 1. What were the problems in the teaching and learning of English in private university students in Bangkok? 2. What were the students' needs to improve English communication skills in the 21st century?

The data presented in this chapter answered the above research questions. The findings included quantitative results drawn from the participants' self-reflection and

additional quantitative ideas from the distributed questionnaires' stakeholders. Next, the data were analyzed and discussed. Finally, the conclusion or the summary of the findings and discussions were presented to answer each research question. Therefore, this study's findings and discussions were lined up from answering the first research question to the final question as presented below.

*What were the problems of English instructional management in a private university in Bangkok?*

The result was summarized from 368 students who were studying in a private university in Bangkok. The respondents consisted of 126 men and 242 women, between 19-21 years old, with between 14-15 years of English learning background.

**Table 3** The average values and standard deviations of teaching and learning problems for overall English language development.

No	Item	N =368 people		
		$\bar{x}$	S.D	Level
1	Curriculum	2.69	1.66	Moderate
2	Instructors	2.17	1.24	Less
3	Teaching methods and learning activities	2.69	1.60	Moderate
4	Measurement and Evaluation	3.31	1.59	Moderate
5	Learners	3.48	1.60	High
<b>Total</b>		<b>2.86</b>	<b>1.53</b>	<b>Moderate</b>

From table 1, the problems of learning and teaching in English for communication as a whole were at a moderate level ( $\bar{x}$  =2.86) by the learners' problems were the highest mean ( $\bar{x}$  =3.48), followed by measurement and evaluation with an average ( $\bar{x}$  =3.31), curriculum, teaching methods, and learning activities had the same average of ( $\bar{x}$  =2.69) the level of problems in the teaching and learning of English for communication in the overall curriculum and each item was at a medium level ( $\bar{x}$  =2.69), and the instructor with the least mean ( $\bar{x}$  = 2.17) The overall problem of teaching and learning English for communication was at a moderate level, the mean ( $\bar{x}$  =2.85), the problem with the learner was the highest ( $\bar{x}$  =3.43), followed by the measurement and evaluation problem. The average value ( $\bar{x}$  =3.31) in the curriculum, teaching methods, and learning activities. The average level was ( $\bar{x}$  =2.69) level of overall and individual English curriculum management for communication. The level was at the moderate level ( $\bar{x}$  =2.69), the level of problems in teaching and learning English for communication in the overall curriculum and individual items. Each item was at a moderate level ( $\bar{x}$  =2.69). At a low level ( $\bar{x}$  =2.17) in teaching methods and learning activities. Overall, and each item was at a moderate level ( $\bar{x}$  =2.69) in measurement and evaluation. Overall, and each item at the average level ( $\bar{x}$  =3.31), the learner overall was at the high level ( $\bar{x}$  =3.48). However, when considered individually, it was found that in item 1, the students had problems in pronunciation of words, phrases, or sentences at a moderate level ( $\bar{x}$  =2.97).

The curriculum based on the problem analysis of overall English teaching management and communication were at a moderate level ( $\bar{x} = 2.69$ ), consistent with Udomkiatchaikul (2016) research that students had problems with teaching and learning that all problems were moderate. The content of some English courses was more theoretical rather than practical. Moreover, it did not use language for communication. The content should be updated not to be too detailed, up-to-date, and applicable. The Instructors, students, had problems with teaching and learning English, and each aspect was at a low level ( $\bar{x} = 2.17$ ). When considered in detail, the teachers lacked preparation for teaching. Teachers did not encourage students to communicate in English in the class. (Thapphet, 2016). Overall, the teaching methods and learning activities and each aspect were at a medium level ( $\bar{x} = 2.69$ ). When considered in detail, students thought that teaching methods and learning activities lacked the technology used in learning English for communication. Learning activities did not encourage students to use English in communication. The teaching did not provide many methods and lacks communication skills training activities, such as speaking in front of the class and discussing presentations. The study of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) should emphasize how students practice English in real-life situations. (SiamRath, 2014). Therefore, this was a way to develop English language skills for communication. The method of teaching language for communication was, therefore, a popular language teaching method.

Additionally, measurement and evaluation and each aspect were at a medium level ( $\bar{x} = 3.31$ ). When considering the details, students thought that the written test was not suitable for assessing communication skills. The exam did not correspond to the English language for communication. The exam focused on the correctness of grammar rather than using the language for communication. Rattanawaropas (2010) asserts that there were many ways to do as necessary to measure and evaluate learning in English. Overall, learners and each aspect were at a high level ( $\bar{x} = 3.48$ ). When reviewing in detail, students had difficulty listening, such as listening to the news. Students had communication problems such as answering questions, discussing, speaking, presenting, and interviewing. There were problems with knowledge of vocabulary. Students lacked the motivation to learn English for communication. They did not have encouragement in using English for communication, consistent with the research of Sangkhaphan, Prakan, and Krirerk (2015) argue that most problems of the learners were students' low interest in learning. The students had insufficient knowledge.

The English instructional management problems in a private university indicated that the institution should add English courses for communication for students to gain knowledge. The institution should urgently train teachers to practice teaching methods. There were more assessments or testing of students on communication. There were problems with teaching and learning, conditions, and teaching and learning problems in the English language for mass communication courses in all four areas: teaching and teaching techniques. The teacher's

personality teaching media and measurement and evaluation were consistent with the research of Ratanavaropas (2010).

*What were the students' needs to improve English communication skills in the 21st century in a private university in Bangkok?*

**Table 4** The average values and standard deviations of the demand for English communication skills development in the 21st century.

No	Item	N =368 people		
		$\bar{x}$	S.D	Level
1	Listening skills	3.51	1.21	High
2	Reading skills	3.47	1.18	High
3	Speaking Skills	3.31	1.34	Moderate
4	Writing skills	3.26	1.23	Moderate
5	communication skills	3.52	1.29	High
<b>Total</b>		<b>3.52</b>	<b>1.29</b>	<b>High</b>

Table 2 suggested that the mean and standard deviation of the needs for English communication skills development in the 21st century, in general, the needs were at a high level ( $\bar{x}$  =3.52). Communication skills had the highest mean value ( $\bar{x}$  =3.52), followed by listening skills with an average ( $\bar{x}$  =3.51), reading skills ( $\bar{x}$  =3.47), but speaking skills ( $\bar{x}$  =3.31) and writing ( $\bar{x}$  =3.26) had moderate average.

Listening skills from the study found that needs to improve English communication skills, the overall and each aspect were at a high level ( $\bar{x}$  =3.51). This result consistent with the research of Kanjanda (2014) that the need for speaking skills is a skill that students need to develop English communication in the 21st century the most because communication in daily life uses listening more than other skills. The students who were studying English in higher education also ad problems because of using English speaking skills. (Tribolet and Sarkis, 2012). Additionally, reading skill is a skill that students need to develop at a high level( $\bar{x}$  =3.52). This result was consistent with Moonkam's research (2018), claiming that most students have difficulty using reading strategies. Reading strategies are a tool that allows the reader to reach the destination of reading. It could capture issues that clarify reading suggestions, reading newspapers, magazines reading articles academic documents.

The study's speaking skills found that students needed to develop overall speaking skills, and each aspect was at a medium level ( $\bar{x}$  =3.52). Most students wanted to speak English correctly and grammatically, consistent with Ritthirat's research (2014) that the students had problems and wanted to develop in English speaking skills.

Writing skills found that students needed to develop overall speaking skills overall at a moderate level ( $\bar{x}$  =3.26). When considering each aspect, students had an understanding of basic grammar in writing. They were able to write correctly according to the principles and writing style, give reasons to support their arguments, according to Sirikhun (2000), who

conducted a study on the English writing ability of Thai students. She studied the ability and problems of writing skills of English students. She found that students could write English for communication with deficiency. Most students had English writing skills such as vocabulary, idioms, grammar structure, and writing mechanism. They could not compile ideas into meaningful messages; communication skills found that students need to develop communication skills overall. Each aspect was at a high level ( $\bar{x} = 3.52$ ). Most students needed to communicate efficiently and interact with listeners/ readers in communication. In today's world society. Chartrakul (2008) argues that foreign language is considered very necessary in everyday life because it is vital for communication, education, occupation, understanding of culture, and community vision in the 21st-century world society.

English has become an essential tool for communication through various technologies both in speaking and writing. Also, most people who have English speaking skills will understand English communication more quickly and efficiently (Wankong, 2016). Listening is the ability to sense what it has heard and interpreted or comprehend what is perceived and understood and remembered, which is a cognitive ability that often requires practice.

There were many suggestions from the students. Most students had the idea that the curriculum was not able to develop students to achieve their goals. It should be emphasized to use English for communication. Most of the time was spent teaching other skills, such as reading. Students were unable to communicate. Teaching materials were not up to date, which was conducive to learning. Besides, the learners wished to learn their English with a foreign teacher or a native speaker to be familiar with the language.

## **Conclusions and Recommendations**

This study aimed to analyze and investigate the problems and needs of students in English communication. This research also explored the requirements in the English development of undergraduate students. Added into this study was examining the respondents' recommendation towards English instructional management. The results suggested many English instructional management problems in promoting communication skills for students who were studying in a private university in Bangkok. The need to develop communication skills in the 21<sup>st</sup> century was to improve students' speaking and listening skills.

The findings obtained from this study might be able to be used as a guideline in designing teaching and learning English for the educational institutions with similar contexts as the university in this study. Throughout the study, the results strongly suggested that the private educational institutions should promote and support English teachers to use modern teaching media and supporting media and quality teaching tools for English teaching classes. Besides, research related to problems and needs in English teaching and learning for communication should be integrated and included into their consideration. They should adjust the learners' attitude towards English to see the importance of English communication in the

21st century. Finally, the institution should encourage the instructors to attend the training or a seminar to learn new teaching theories and techniques that allow teaching management to meet the learners' needs to be more effective.

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